

# Beyond 2020 Vision

A Publication of Morialta Uniting Church

August 2025

Morialta Uniting Church—follow us on Facebook or check out our website at [www.morialtauca.org.au](http://www.morialtauca.org.au)

## Welcome to our August edition

On our front page we bring you an interesting article on world tensions – and religion is not part of it.

There is the usual line-up of news and articles from Morialta and a mix of stories and reflections of general interest, as well as others from the UCA and wider church.

The **deadline for the next Vision will be 29<sup>th</sup> August**. Either drop your contributions in to the church office or call/email Colin on 0427 122 106 or [snout-n-about@bigpond.com](mailto:snout-n-about@bigpond.com)

Go well!

*Helena Begg, Publisher and Colin Cargill, Editor*



## Collective shadow: Hate disguised as love

*Omid Safi, a poet and Islamic scholar –  
Center for Action and Contemplation*

I fundamentally do not believe that there is religious conflict and tension in this world. There is conflict in this world; there is genocide in this world. There is racism, there is starvation, and the intentional starvation of people. There is occupation. There are lots of hideous things happening.

I think that it is ego, greed, and selfishness that is putting the small self individually, communally, nationally, and racially on the throne of wrong and putting the right forever on the scaffold. Greed and ego and hatred love to do cosplay (dress-up) ... Their favourite costumes are the things that are of light, including religion.

I want us to really sit with that question: Is there actually religious conflict in this world with what we find our religious traditions teaching us? At the heart of the Jewish faith, that beautiful noble tradition: Be kind to the stranger for you yourselves were once strangers in Egypt (Deuteronomy 10:19). Our beloved Christ: Be kind to the poor, the orphan, the needy, the widow; that which you do to the least of these, you do unto me (Matthew 25:40). Our beloved Prophet Muhammad: That the cry of the orphan rises all the way up to the throne of God and shakes it to its mighty foundation. These folks are drinking from the same fountain. They're bathed in the same light.

I want us to be able to discern the meaning of that beautiful prayer of the Prophet Muhammad when he says, "My Lord, allow us to see things as they are in You. Allow us to see things as they are in truth." Just because ego and greed and hatred are doing cosplay as religion, I don't want us to give them that much credit. I want us to insist that no, there is real religion! There's real faith, and it's humble and it carries the scent of love and concern, not just for our own kind, but for all of us.

## Adelaide Male Voice Choir at MUC

Once again the Adelaide Male Voice Choir will be performing at Morialta Uniting Church.

**Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2.00-4.00pm**



Come along and enjoy a springtime treat of delightful music presented by this popular choir, followed by afternoon tea.

Bring your friends for a variety of music of different genres – popular show music, spirituals, folk songs and sea shanties.

Tickets will be available soon through the church office or Trybooking and proceeds will be shared with AMVC. If we all bring one friend, it will be a great success!

Please put the date in your diary NOW and watch the newsletter for more information!

## News from Church Council

The full agenda of the July meeting is in the Church Council folder in the library, and the minutes will also be there once they are confirmed. In the meantime, here are some highlights! As always, if you have any questions, please talk to one of the members of Church Council.

- Towards Net Zero: Colin has written a full report on this elsewhere in this issue, so check it out!
- Medical Emergency Protocols: Council approved protocols for how we can best manage care if a medical emergency should occur on the premises in three different contexts when many people are present:
  - \* During streamed worship or a funeral in the church;

- \* During after-service tea and coffee in the hall; or
- \* During an event held either in the church or the hall.

Each protocol states who is the first responder/person in charge who calls the ambulance, where a list of next steps can be found, what steps should be taken, and how to ensure privacy for the patient and clear access for the ambos. Each protocol alerts us to the location of the defibrillator – clearly labelled on the wall of the main foyer near the stained-glass windows – and other supplies, and the names of trained persons who can help until ambos arrive: Margaret Clogg, Mandy Wood, Anne Butler and June Searle.

Copies of the full protocols will be appended to the July minutes once they have been confirmed.

## Dawoodi Bohras' Food Drive

Our Dawoodi Bohra friends thank everyone who contributed to their recent food drive for Foodbank SA/NT.

Foodbank is Australia's largest food relief organisation, providing food and groceries to charities and school breakfast programs in every state and territory.

Over 120 kg food was donated in this very successful campaign. Thanks to all who contributed.



## The Baiame's Ngunnhu Fish Traps

You may remember this photo from our worship service on 3<sup>rd</sup> August. It is of the Baiame's Ngunnhu Fish Traps, also known as the Brewarrina Aboriginal Fish Traps. They are a significant cultural site located on the Barwon River in Brewarrina, NSW.

These ancient, dry-stone structures, used by the Ngemba, Ualarai, Murrawarri, and Wailwan peoples, are one of the oldest known human-made structures in the world. They consist of weirs and holding ponds designed to catch fish as they swim upstream.

The traps are estimated to be over 40,000 years old and stretch for about 500m along the Barwon River. They utilize a series of rock walls to guide fish into holding ponds, allowing for efficient and sustainable fishing.

They are a testament to the ingenuity and deep connection to the land of the Aboriginal peoples who created and used them.

According to Aboriginal tradition, the traps were created by the ancestral being, Baiame.

While the Ngemba people are considered the traditional custodians, the traps were traditionally used and shared with other tribes, including the Ualarai, Murrawarri, and Wailwan.

The fish traps were not just for food, but also served as a place for ceremonies, initiations, and trade between different groups.

The traps have faced damage and neglect since European settlement, including stones being removed and the introduction of invasive species like carp. Drought and water allocations upstream also pose a threat to the river's health and the traps.

*Brewarrina Fish Traps - Indigenous Architecture - Facebook*

21 Feb 2019 — Baiame's Ngunnhu or the Brewarrina Fish Traps are estimated to be over 40,000 years old and one of the oldest man-made

*Photo - Australian aboriginal fish traps on the Barwon River at Brewarrina are heritage-listed - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*





## Congregation travel survey

Chris Ayles, John Drew and Colin Cargill

Thanks to everyone who completed the travel survey - we greatly appreciate your support.

In total we received replies for 37 cars out of an estimated 46 cars that regularly drive to MUC for worship, meetings, events and group activities.

The average return trip from home to 26 Chapel St was 10.3 km and the average fuel usage was approximately 0.77 litres per round trip.

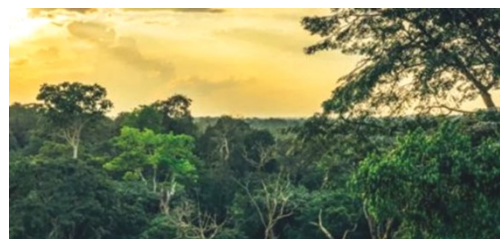
Collectively we drive 46,900 km per year, and burn around 290 litres of fuel to attend worship, meetings, events and group activities and to maintain the Morialta Community. This generates approximately 11.3 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per annum.

**Church Council has now approved our recommendations which were:**

1. Purchase batteries for storing electricity produced during the day and selling that to students in the houses adjacent to the church and the groups who use the church and hall. The Property and Finance Teams have been asked to bring a cost benefit proposal to the next meeting of Council.
2. Purchase an annual offset - to be reviewed each year – to cover the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions produced by travel and other activities. Church Council has approved our recommendation to invest \$30 per tonne of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (total 15.5 tonne x \$30 = \$465) per annum in ‘[the Sunnyside Permanent Planting Forest Project](#)’.
3. We will audit our CO<sub>2</sub> emissions annually and adjust our investment accordingly.

## As individuals we can also do our bit to reduce our own carbon footprint.

- Transport:
  - Buy an EV;
  - Walk;
  - Ride a bike (for non-OBEs only);
  - Ride an electric mobility scooter;
  - Use public transport;
- Consider solar panels and battery storage for our homes;
- Switch to carbon neutral suppliers for all purchases (including our medical support, the super market we use, where we buy food and clothing, hardware, banking, home services etc);
- Find an easy-to-use carbon calculator (online) <https://coolclimate.berkeley.edu/calculator> or <https://greenly.earth/en-gb/blog/company-guide/5-best-carbon-footprint-calculators>
- Calculate your own CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and buy tax deductible offsets for your own CO<sub>2</sub> emissions; Greenfleet <https://www.greenfleet.com.au/pages/our-history> or Carbon Neutral <https://info.carbonneutral.com.au/first-nations-focused-australian-carbon-credits>



*The Sunnyside Permanent Planting Forest Project*

## Australia is on the move

*Adapted from an article by Lydia Amazouz in the Daily Galaxy*

Australia is on a slow but unstoppable collision course with Asia, but do not panic. Drifting 7cm northward every year – the same speed your fingernails grow – it will take millions of years before Australians feel the bump. The collision is predicted to reshape landscapes, trigger earthquakes, and even alter ecosystems as Australia’s unique wildlife collides with Asia’s dominant species.

This movement is part of a much larger process – plate tectonics, which has been shaping Earth’s continents for hundreds of millions of years. Australia broke free of Antarctica around 80 million years ago and has been steadily drifting northward. It will eventually collide with Asia triggering massive geological and environmental changes.

The collision will also dramatically change biodiversity. Australia is home to some of the world’s most unique animals, including kangaroos, wombats, and the elusive platypus. But what happens when the continent merges with Asia, home to an entirely different set of species?

Australia’s northward drift isn’t just a problem for the distant future – it’s already causing issues today. In 2016, scientists discovered that Australia’s entire GPS coordinate system was off by 1.5 meters due to the continent’s movement. As a result, Australia had to adjust its official coordinates by 1.8 meters to ensure that GPS systems remained accurate.

As the continent continues moving, navigation systems, infrastructure, and satellite mapping technologies will need constant updates to prevent errors. This could have significant implications for autonomous vehicles, precision agriculture, and aviation, where even minor inaccuracies can lead to major disruptions.

While the idea of Australia crashing into Asia might sound catastrophic, the reality is that plate tectonics is an unstoppable force. The Earth’s continents are constantly shifting, and while these movements happen slowly, their impact over millions of years is profound.

However for now, Australians don’t need to worry about waking up in a new continent, or the long-term fate of Australia’s wildlife. The continent’s journey northward is an unfolding story that will continue for millions of years to come.

## Friendship Group

From Margaret Clogg

The Friendship Group met recently at Cafe Brunelli, Glynde for a midyear luncheon. The 12 members present were able to select from a wide range of delicious dishes. It was a lovely social occasion with much reminiscing, chatter and laughter.

Our next meeting will be held on Thursday August 21st at 10am in the church hall. This will be a quiz titled "Where in the world was this photo taken?".

If you would like to bring a light lunch and join us after the meeting, it is an opportunity for more fellowship. Every-one is welcome.



## Congratulations Doreen – 95 not out!

Doreen and her friend Mario, who turned 95 on the same day, cutting their cake at Clayton Church Homes, Magill.

(Photo courtesy Jenny Swanbury)

## Community lunch & video clip show

### Community lunch and video clips

Thanks to our volunteers and those who supported and enjoyed our community lunch, followed by a fun filled 80 minutes of video clips, on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> July. As a result our bank balance has improved by \$1,040.00. Thanks to our generous soup and dessert makers, expenses were zero.

Special thanks to Lesley who organised the lunch and made the desserts and to all her helpers in the kitchen – Anne I, Helena B, Eileen H, Jill K and Anne B – and to Judith P and Margaret C who made the delicious soups.

Thanks to Carole, Helena and Nicole for organising and selling tickets – an important task.

Special thanks also to Chris A for his professional job as emcee, John S for producing the PowerPoint show, John D who controlled the sound and Chris, John S and Colin C who search the internet and selected the video clips we enjoyed.

Volunteers are the people that keep MUC alive!



Friends at Kimba UC watching Rev Anne (screenshot)



## News from Kimba UC

Helen Tucker – 11<sup>th</sup> July

We have been super blessed this week with rain ☔

We arrived home Tuesday night, and on Wednesday morning I tipped out 25ml (hadn't been checked since Friday) Thursday morning was 12ml and this morning 5ml. Our prayers have been answered 😊

## Morialta folk enjoyed a night out at Her Majesty's Theatre

Several friends enjoyed a drink with the Musical Director, Kym Purling, after attending "Kimberly Akimbo". The musical, created by David Lindsay-Abaire, tells the story of Kimberly, a teenage girl with a rare genetic condition causing her to age rapidly. The play, written in 2000, explores her life as she grapples with her physical appearance, her dysfunctional family, and the challenges of adolescence.



Kym directed the orchestra and played piano for the performances at Her Majesty's, and is now with the cast in Melbourne.



## Meister Eckhart – German mystic

*Adapted from an article by Matthew Fox, theologian, Centre for Action and Contemplation*



Of all the mystics of the west, it is difficult to find anyone who more profoundly articulates the journey we make into the divine and out in the world again than Meister Eckhart. His is a spirituality of passion and compassion. Eckhart, a Dominican friar and preacher, lived from 1260 to 1329.... He teaches that spiritual awakening is to lead to justice-making and compassion in the world. He practiced what he preached.... Two examples of this are his support of the Beguine movement which was the women's movement of the fourteenth century. And another is his support of the peasants. Indeed, half his sermons were preached in the peasant dialect of his day, and at his trial he was accused of "confusing the simple people" by telling them that they were all "aristocrats," or "royal persons."

But this is precisely the heart of Eckhart's teaching and the heart of the biblical tradition of creation spirituality: That humans are blessed with divine powers and beauty but also with responsibilities of justice-making and compassion that characterize all royal personhood. How do we get to such deep self-esteem and to such deep acceptance of our

responsibility? Our awareness is everything; our waking up is everything. We need to move from the superficial or "outer self" to the true self or "inner self." Who is this inner self? Eckhart answers this question in his treatise "On the Aristocrat," or "On the Royal Person."

The inner person is the soil in which God has sown the divine likeness and image and in which God sows the good seed, the roots of all wisdom, all skills, all virtues, all goodness—the seed of the divine nature.... This is the good tree of which our Lord says that it always bears good fruit and never evil fruit. For it desires goodness and is inclined toward goodness....

The seed of God is in us. If the seed had a good, wise, and industrious cultivator, it would thrive all the more and grow up to God whose seed it is, and the fruit would be equal to the nature of God. Now, the seed of a pear tree grows into a pear tree, a hazel seed into a hazel tree, the seed of God into God.... While this seed may be crowded, hidden away, and never cultivated, it will still never be obliterated. It glows and shines, gives off light, burns, and is unceasingly inclined toward God.

Fox concludes:

It is our task to cultivate this seed and give it nourishment so that the divine image in us can grow and thrive and prosper. This is what the spiritual journey is all about. Our spiritual journey consists in nourishing and watering and caring for this God-seed that is in all of us.

## The central elements of religious life

Principled ethics and social justice have always been central elements of the religious life.

As a result, variants of the golden rule are common to many of the world's great faith traditions.

- Taoism: "Regard your neighbour's gain as your gain, and your neighbour's loss as your own loss."
- Buddhism: "Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful."
- Hinduism: "This is the sum of duty; do nothing to others that you would not have them do to you."
- Zoroastrianism: "That nature alone is good which refrains from doing to another whatsoever is not good for itself."
- Judaism: "What is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow man. This is the entire Law; all the rest is commentary." (Hillel)
- Christianity: "Do to others what you would have them do to you."
- Islam: "No one of you is a believer until he desires for

his brother that which he desires for himself."

This empathy toward the other has become interwoven with each religion's unique revelations, rules and rituals. When the ethic of compassion and justice is valued and practiced, these religions work for the good of humanity.

However, when people of religion ignore their empathic and compassionate tradition, they can become harmful and even dangerous to the life of the world. That is the danger of fundamentalism, whether it is Christian, Jewish, or Islamic. Fundamentalism focuses on what separates us, defining insiders and outsiders. It views people of other faiths as enemies and agents of evil.

But concern for the well-being of others focuses on those values we hold in common – uniting us in spite of our historic, cultural, and religious differences. It is this common concern that enables leaders of many religious traditions to join together in efforts to promote peace and justice in the world."

From "A Conspiracy of Love: Following Jesus in a Postmodern World" by Kurt Struckmeyer® One of the books recently read by members of Gateways.



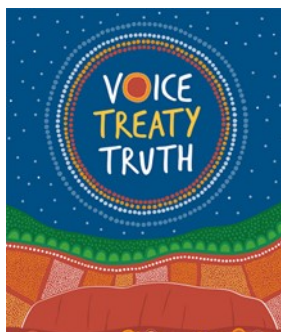
The practice of hospitality reflects a willingness on the part of a community of people to be open to others and to their insights, needs, and contributions. Hospitable communities recognize that they are incomplete without other folks but also that they have a "treasure" to share with them.

—Christine Pohl

## Tracking Treaty

Adapted from an article by Blake Cansdale on the ANTaR website\*

While no formal Treaty has ever been signed between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the British or Australian governments, it could have been different in South Australia.



In 1832, George Arthur, the Governor of Van Diemen's Land (now Tasmania) noted that it was 'a fatal error... that a Treaty was not entered into with the natives' in the colony. Arthur recommended a Treaty be signed before a colony was set up in South Australia. Unlike other areas of Australia, British colonisation of South Australia was meticulously planned. The South Australia Act 1834 legislated for the establishment of a settlement in South Australia. In 1836, Letters Patent establishing the Province of South Australia were issued. Significantly, the Letters Patent included recognition of the rights of the 'Aboriginal Natives' to live within the lands of the new Province. Despite the existence of the Letters Patent, the rights of First Nations peoples were ignored.

The path to contemporary treaty in South Australia began in 2016, when the state government announced that it would work towards the establishment of up to 40 Treaties across South Australia. In February 2017, senior Kokatha and Mirning man Dr Roger Thomas was appointed Treaty Commissioner and began a two-phase consultation process.

In April 2017, the Commissioner met with over 280 First Nations people around the state and received many written submissions. In an interim report, Dr Thomas noted a strong

appetite for Treaty. A second stage of consultation was held between May and July 2017.

In September 2017, the first negotiations in Australia between a government and a First Nation explicitly understood as Treaty discussions commenced between South Australia and the Ngarrindjeri nation.

In February 2018, the government signed the Buthera Agreement with the Narungga nation of the Yorke Peninsula, committing the parties to a three-year process of negotiations. That same month, the Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority and the State government signed an agreement noting the State's '[desire] to enter into a Treaty', and obligating the State to 'promote a legislative structure that enables the parties to enter in the Treaty negotiated between them'.

However, in June 2018, these negotiations were abandoned.

In March 2022, the South Australia government re-confirmed the commitment to establishing Treaties with First Nations peoples – a process that has begun through institutionalising a First Nations Voice in the State's parliament. On 26 March 2023, the South Australian Parliament passed the First Nations Voice Bill 2023.

A year later, First Nations peoples voted in the Voice's first ever election, with 46 people elected to sit on the six local Voices. Two presiding members from each Local Voice will be appointed to sit on the State Voice. It is expected that the Voice will advance treaty talks in South Australia.

\*ANTaR stands for Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation

"Hope is itself a species of happiness, and, perhaps, the chief happiness which this world affords." Samuel Johnson

## A prayer by Graeme Mulvey

Published on Geoff Boyce blog

Je suis Charlie. I am Charlie.  
I have many names.  
Now I am Ukrainian, I am a soldier and I am a young mother  
and I am her children. I am a peace keeper.  
I am middle eastern, sometimes a citizen of Gaza,  
and also an Israeli.  
And I am a displaced person in Sudan.  
All of these people are in me.  
And I am fearful. What will become of me and my family?  
How can I find refuge?  
Is there hope? I long for hope.

I long for a future that is different – safe, secure, loving.  
God of hope – you call me, you beckon me,  
you encourage me.  
Mostly I am too frightened, too dispirited to hear you.  
It seems like nothing's gonna change my world.  
But there are times when I glimpse the cosmic Christ and see a  
new world.

*Sounds of laughter, shades of earth are ringing through my  
open mind  
Inciting and inviting me  
Limitless undying love which shines around me like a million  
suns  
It calls me on and on across the universe.*

I am here for now.  
Safe, warm, a world away from my other selves.  
I read the news feeds, I see the footage of fear and  
destruction. What to do?  
I reach out to touch to comfort.

Connector God, God of hope, peace and love.  
Be here with me in my battle fatigues at the war front, in my  
half-destroyed city, in my clearly marked United Nations  
vehicle, in the dust and heat of my refugee camp.  
Be here with me in my church amongst my neighbours and  
friends.

**Amen**

*Quotations, in italics, from the Beatles' song 'Across the  
Universe'.*

*Graeme Mulvey is a GP approaching retirement*

## My travellers from the east

From Cynthia Story

I have three first cousins living close to each other in the northern suburbs of Sydney. They are now quickly approaching close to my own age – always a shock when I realise that! Their way of life and expectation are miles away from any of my ideas, any of my hopes and dreams kept hidden close in my breast – lest they be laughed at.

This was the case when we were all young, they with breezy, crazy ideas and wild dreams, and I with tightly held dreams...although probably something like theirs. We had no time at all to talk with each other ...

This state of our relationships continued on until after our parents left us in the usual fashion – and then our communications became suddenly very real and alive! We discovered the worth of each other, and got to know our different personalities, finding that our advanced ages encircled us with understanding, and we felt safe within our new found circle. Now we are all much older, more tolerant of each other, new grown up views abound. Looking around our circle we found that we liked each other!

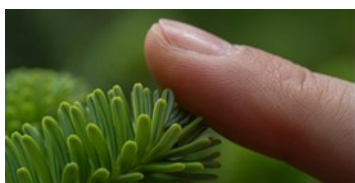
And so their visit last week – to see a special performance of the Australian Ballet on one day, and visit me at home the day before! I turned this social catch up into a lunch at the nearby hotel – a great success – in spite of the vicious cold, wind and rain. We happily and enthusiastically greeted each other in a flurry of damp coats and scarves – just so delighted to see the much loved faces as before. Almost immediately we started reminiscing – one episode after another came to mind .... we laughed till I felt close to tears.

The feeling of closeness restored in a day of storms and persistent rainfall – touched with splashes of golden wine as we sat at lunch – a long lunch. I looked around the table, studying the faces so familiar, remembering the unique sound of their voices, and wondering how long it will be before the next time...



## Seeing nature differently

Adapted from an article by Brian McLaren  
Center for Action and Contemplation



We see the natural world from different vantage points. For example, a real estate developer might look at a beautiful landscape and think, “Wow we could create an

incredible housing development with a lake. It would be worth a fortune.” A paper manufacturer sees a forested mountainside and thinks about how much lumber and paper he could make from those trees and leasing that mountainside. Meanwhile, an angler would see a trout stream coming down the mountainside that he’d like to protect. An ecologist might see an endangered species of fish that needs to be preserved. A theologian, depending on his or her background, might see theological justifications for selling that land to the real estate developer or manufacturer, or for preserving it with the angler and ecologist.

Every tree, every meadow, every stream, every wave rolling in on the beach ... each of us sees them with different vision. We bring our own different backgrounds, perspectives, needs, interests, desires, and problems to whatever we see.

Every night we have a little herd of iguanas on our roof, including a five-foot-long iguana that we call T-Rex – he’s big, male, and a bright orange colour. We have a respectful relationship, similarly with a gopher tortoise that has dug its burrow outside my front sidewalk.

I have to respect their space which for me is a part of friendship. We have a term for people who don’t respect boundaries: We call them narcissists. They’re always impeding and crossing boundaries to take advantage of us. We humans tend to have a narcissistic relationship with our fellow creatures, but there’s an option for generous friendship that creates a kind of reverence, respect, and enjoyment.

I think this is one of our real struggles with the natural world. We’re so used to being in control of things that when the natural world demands legitimate respect from us, we think it’s being hostile. This is part of our current life curriculum as human beings – to learn appropriate respect after centuries of domination. It’s parallel to what people with privilege need to learn – whether it’s white privilege, male privilege, or the privilege of the rich. Privileged people are so used to acting in domineering ways that when you ask them to show proper respect, they feel they’re being deprived or persecuted. But this respect is something we need and it’s a matter of survival right now for us to learn it.

## Just \$25 can provide seeds that stand between a family and disaster in Timor-Leste.

For families living in areas prone to landslides and soil erosion, it’s hard to grow food. On top of hunger, there’s constant anxiety that your house and family could be swallowed by mud during the next storm, which are coming more and more often.

UnitingWorld partners are helping people plant out these areas to stabilise the land, absorb carbon, revitalise the soil for crop growth, plant gardens and deliver protection from disaster.

Donate now at  
<https://donate.unitingworld.org.au/donate-now/>





## Can a wooden spoon really stop a pot from boiling over?

*Adapted from an article by Jay Deagon and Gemma Mann  
CQ University Australia published in the Conversation*

Are there ways to prevent the pot boiling over on the stove? One solution is to place a wooden spoon across the top of the pot. But does it work? In short, it will work, but not for long periods of time.

It is not the pot of rapidly boiling pure water that is the problem, it is the ingredients added to the water. Pots of pasta, rice, porridge or milk are the most prone to boiling over and making a mess. A heavy stew is less likely to bubble over – unless you overfill the pot.

The main culprits for rapid boiling and overflow are carbohydrates and proteins. When carbohydrates and/or proteins come into contact with heated water molecules, their properties change and structures rearrange.

Changes can happen quickly if the heat is high. Excited by lots of heat, the water molecules begin to boil rapidly. As this occurs, bubbles form. The carbohydrates involved in a pot boiling over and messing up your kitchen are primarily plant based. Plant starches such as wheat, rice, potato or corn. If you're boiling anything with milk, a protein called casein can contribute to the bubbles.

As bubbles form, the larger starch and/or protein particles start to coat the bubbles and start to form a gel, which becomes sticky. These hot, sticky bubbles - filled with air and coated with sticky starch gel, build on top of each other and rise up the sides of the pot.

Placing a wooden spoon over a boiling pot acts as an interruption to the bubbles – it lowers the surface temperature and provides a porous surface to burst the bubbles. This stops them from climbing over the edge of the pot.



But you can't just leave a wooden spoon over the pot indefinitely and expect it to not boil over. As the spoon is exposed to heat, moisture, sticky starch or casein bubbles, it will become the same temperature as the liquid. It will no longer reduce the surface temperature, nor be porous enough to burst bubbles.

This is why some people claim the spoon doesn't work – because it has a limited window of effectiveness.

You can also stir the pot – but the best solution is to try not to get distracted when cooking!

## Dumpster diving cockatoos now use drinking fountains

*Adapted from an article by Jack Tamisiea in Science News*

In a previous edition of Vision we reported on sulphur-crested cockatoos (*Cacatua galerita*) being dumpster divers – breaking into garbage bins and scarfing down scraps for breakfast.

Now, scientists have discovered an even more impressive skill: one flock of cockatoos has learned to operate human drinking fountains, performing a complex series of twists and holds to release the water into their mouths.



*Photo Western Sydney University*

The behaviour – not seen in any other bird - has been so successful, it appears to be spreading among western Sydney's cockatoo population. As such, it likely represents a local "cultural tradition." Once a few cockatoos figured it out, it seems others likely picked it up by watching them.

Barbara Klump, a behavioural ecologist at the University of Vienna, has studied Sydney's cockatoos for years. While conducting fieldwork in western Sydney, she noticed several of the birds perched on a fence waiting their turn to investigate a nearby water fountain. To access water, human

patrons twist and hold the fountain's handle, which causes water to spew from a spout embedded inside a rubber top. When Klump got closer, she realised the cockatoos seemed to be doing the same.

Every cockatoo exhibited slight variations in its plan of attack. But the general strategy was the same: Each placed one or both of its feet on the fountain's twist handle, then lowered its weight to twist the handle clockwise and prevent it from springing back up. As the parrots slurped water from the bubbling spout, their sharp beaks often left behind chew marks on the fountain's rubber top.

These motions illustrate the dexterity of the birds' feet and large beaks, which set them apart from other brainiac birds. For example crows may be as smart as cockatoos, they do not have the physical tools at their disposal to manipulate objects. Cockatoos, who can use both their beaks and feet, are more equipped for this type of behaviour.

However not all cockatoos are successful in quenching their thirsts. The team found that only 41% of attempts ended with the birds drinking water. The animals struggled especially when other cockatoos crowded or rushed them.

As to why cockatoos gravitate to drinking fountains when plenty of other water sources are available, it may be taste, or the elevated fountain perch helps them spot approaching predators such as eagles and falcons or curiosity!

Every time we are drawn to look up into the night sky and reflect on the awesome beauty of the universe, we are actually the universe reflecting on itself. And this changes everything.

*Brian Swimme and Mary Evelyn Tucker*